

a catheter hub distal end and a catheter hub proximal end, the catheter hub distal end having the catheter tube extending therefrom;

a catheter hub opening, the catheter hub opening defining a catheter hub annular space;

a needle hub distal end and a needle hub proximal end, the needle hub distal end having the needle extending therefrom;

a needle protector clip having a resilient biasing portion; wherein when the needle is in the ready position, which is the position in which the needle projects into the catheter passage and the needle tip extends beyond the catheter tube; the needle protector clip is disposed over the needle and is located within the catheter hub annular space but spaced apart from the needle hub distal end; and wherein when the needle is in a fully retracted position, which is the position in which the needle protector clip moves relative to the needle until the needle is completely withdrawn from the catheter hub annular space, the needle protector clip is activated and attaches to the needle at the needle tip and the large diameter segment; and

wherein the resilient biasing portion has a first position and a second position, the first position is characterized by the resilient biasing portion abutting the needle shaft and the second position is characterized by the resilient biasing portion shielding the needle tip and preventing accidental contact with the needle tip.

33/ 51. (New) The catheter device of claim 50, wherein the needle protector clip further comprises a protector clip proximal end and a protector clip distal end, and wherein the protector clip is secured to the needle tip when the needle is in the fully retracted position by a portion of the protector clip proximal end making contact with the large diameter segment and a portion of the protector clip distal end shielding the needle tip.

34/ 52. (New) The catheter device of claim 50, further comprising a needle protector clip outer contact surface, and wherein the needle protector clip is secured to the catheter hub annular space by frictionally engaging the needle protector clip outer contact

surface with a surface located within the catheter hub annular space; the needle protector clip is configured to separate from the catheter hub annular space when the frictional engagement is removed.

35/ 53. (New) The catheter device of claim 50, wherein the large diameter segment is a crimp. 32

al/ 34/ 54. (New) A catheter device comprising:  
a needle hub having a needle hub proximal end and a needle hub distal end;  
the needle hub distal end is secured to a needle at the needle's proximal end, the needle has a needle tip, a needle shaft, and a needle crimp disposed proximal of the needle tip;  
a catheter hub having a catheter hub proximal end and a catheter hub distal end; the catheter hub distal end is secured to a catheter tube at the catheter tube's proximal end;

the catheter tube has an opening at a catheter tube distal end and the catheter tube proximal end, and a catheter tube annular space defined between the two openings;

wherein the needle and the crimp are disposed within the catheter tube annular space and the needle tip extends beyond the annular space when the needle is in a ready position; and

a needle protector for shielding the needle tip and preventing accidental contact with the needle tip when the needle is in a fully retracted position, the needle protector is located adjacent to but spaced apart from the needle hub distal end, the needle protector comprising an opening for allowing the needle to slide from between the ready position and the fully retracted position, the needle protector further comprising a protector arm and a protector arm first position and second position, the protector arm first position is a position in which the protector arm is in a flexed state and contacts the needle shaft and the protector arm second position is a position in which the protector arm is in a relaxed state and the needle protector is shielding the needle tip and preventing accidental contact with the needle tip.

37/ 55. (New) The catheter device of claim 54, wherein the needle protector clip further comprises a protector clip proximal end and a protector clip distal end, wherein the protector clip is secured to the needle tip when the needle is in the fully retracted position by a portion of the protector clip proximal end making contact with the needle crimp and a portion of the protector clip distal end shielding the needle tip.

38/ 56. (New) The catheter device of claim 54, further comprising a needle protector clip outer contact surface, and wherein the needle protector clip is secured to the catheter hub annular space by frictionally engaging the needle protector clip outer contact surface with a surface located within the catheter hub annular space; the needle protector clip is configured to separate from the catheter hub annular space when the frictional engagement is removed.

57. (New) An IV catheter apparatus comprising a tubular catheter having a proximal end and a distal end, a needle having a needle shaft and a tip, said needle being received within said tubular catheter when in a ready position, a catheter hub attached to the proximal end of said catheter, said catheter hub having a hollow interior and an inner wall, said needle being movable between said ready position in which said tip is outside of said catheter hub and a retracted position in which said tip is within the interior of said catheter hub, a needle guard positioned in the interior of said catheter hub and including a resilient portion engaged by said needle shaft when said needle is in its ready position, the needle guard resilient portion is movable within the interior of said catheter hub to a blocking position distal of said needle tip when said needle is in its retracted position in which said needle shaft no longer exerts a force on said resilient portion of said needle guard.